1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

8

Daily Life of the Fishing Village

Fishing families may have informal gatherings toward the end of the day. On a late summer afternoon, the family may sit in the open doorway of the house, for hedges, fences, the barriers, and trees are rare. The wife may be nursing her naked child. Her husband, a fisherman, has changed into his indigo blue and white striped kimono, a tall, broad, deeply tanned man. Next to him sits his mother, over 70 years old, her hands tattooed, as are those of all the old women. She is wearing a kimono of the same color, but of a dot pattern. They sit on unrolled mats. On the veranda, three or four men, unwashed and still in their work clothes, discuss the events of the day. A lacquer tray with tea cups is on the floor near them and the tea (as it so often is) may be cold. There is brown sugar to eat along with the tea. The grandmother may be economically smoking a half or a third of a cigarette in the typical Japanese pipe. As it grows later, the wife gets up, pours some water in the stone mortar, and smashes the sweet potatoes with the long wooden pole. The men continue talking for a while, then take their leave. The wife, her work at the mortar finished, goes into the dirt kitchen to start the evening meal.

The wife of the fisherman has worries that do not bother the farmer's wife. There is always the danger that her husband, or son, will not return, a real possibility, of which the frequency of widowhood in Minatogawa is proof. Every season, there is at least one instance of a fisherman who has either been lost, or whose delay in returning has provoked intense worry. If crews are still out when an unexpected storm arises, there is considerable tension in the village. Since the war, rescues at sea are more likely than before. The village headman quickly reports overdue boats. The American forces have created much good will in seeking fishermen lost at sea.

Woman, on the other hand, have opportunities for leisure when the catch is light, or weather is unfavorable. At these times, they can busy themselves with other tasks, in the field, gathering stones, getting miscanthus, but they do not have the unremitting activity of the woman in the agricultural village. There is more visiting during the day than one observes in an agricultural village.

The fisherman, with or without land, tries to keep pigs and perhaps a few goats. In Minatogawa, the pens are often made of sandstone quarried here. Not only the floors and the sides, but the stalls are made of this material. One reason for this is the openness of the village and the danger that pigs will be killed in a storm. A typhoon may carry away the house, its owners having gone to the stronger house of a friend or relative, but pigs are an investment and an asset to be guarded.

843 pregnancy are also said to be rare, although miscarriages in later pregnancy up to two or three months before the birth are more numerous because of the continuing heavy work of the mother in the fields. The mother in the agricultural village normally works up to the time for 840 the birth. She eats her normal diet. After birth, the child is placed on a large comforter (futon) beside the mother.

The midwife, after delivery, goes once a day for a week to the mother's home. Her fee is not decided upon before hand, but according [846] to custom, averages ¥350 for a normal and ¥500 for a difficult birth, [965] a low fee probably enforced by the poverty and lack of cash of farm families. (In Naha corresponding fees are said to be ¥1-2000).

853 There is no uniform way of feeding the child after birth. In most cases the child is not breast fed until after the third day due to the fact that mothers have little milk at this time. The first, second, and the third days it is fed warm water with small amounts of white sugar, but this is by no means universal. Some mothers have said that they give the child the breast 4 or 5 hours after birth. In any case, the child very quickly becomes accustomed to feeding at the breast, and this continues for an indeterminate period, depending on the mother and the child. It may be for two years, or until the next [862] child comes. In all communities studied, other arrangements are made in the unlikely event that the mother does not have milk of her own. The child may be given evaporated cow's milk or friends or relatives nurse the child. In Minatogawa, if a woman has special duties or takes a trip out of town and cannot take her child with her, she can pay to have it nursed.

843 One belief regarding pregnancy still exists among the old in the Oinoza area. If a new house is being built during the pregnancy of the woman of the house, the cap of the roof is not put on until after the birth has taken place.

2

Birth Customs and Convalescence

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[189] In Minatogawa, and to a much lesser extent in Hanashiro, birth customs are related to certain beliefs about the pig pen. These were not known in Hateuda. In the two southern villages they have virtually disappeared, except among the old. According to a Hanashiro farmer's wife, the child on the day of its birth is washed, dressed in new clothes, and carried to the pig pen, which is supposed to frighten away evil spirits (bakemono).[1] [See footnote 1, bottom of p. 257--analyst]

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grandparents. The food was then served: noodles cooked with vegetables, with a slight fish flavor; rolls; tenoura, a sort of fritter; a fish cake known as kamobuko with a red border symbolizing happiness, and plenty of sake (awamori). A streamer hung from the ceiling near the alcove, announcing the name and date of birth of the new born child, together with the written wish that she might live any number of 10,000 year periods. There are no special ceremonies on these occasions. Some guests drop in for a few minutes, others remain for the whole evening. The women and the children go home early, while the men continue talking and drinking. This celebration is the first of a series that continues through a person's life, and if his descendants are devoted, will end 33 years after his death. After this celebration, things settle down until the child's first birthday.

852 [262] [212]

At present a child's age is reckoned in the same way as the Western custom. A child is one year old one year after the date of his birth. This is a recent innovation in force since January 1, 1950. Formerly age was reckoned in the Chinese and Japanese manner. A child born during a year was one year old and on the following New Year became two years of age. Thus a child born on December 27 would be two on January 1. The difference between the Chinese-Japanese and the western reckoning is that the former counts the years during which a person lives with New Years as the date for increasing the age, the latter counts the number of one year periods in which a person has lived.

805 [M]

The old system of reckoning age is inconvenient and conceals age differences. A one day difference might mean a year's difference in age in the case of a child born on December 31, and another on January 1. Determining the actual age of a person was troublesome. When children started to school, they might be 6, 7, or 8 years old and still be about the same actual age.

4

The Early Years

In all the villages studied, the women returned to their normal tasks about a month after childbirth. When the mother returns to the fields, the grandmother may accompany mother and child to the fields, the grandmother watching the child, while the mother nurses it at 10, 1, and 4. If the grandmother is too old and disabled, the child might stay home with the grandmother and the mother return from the fields to feed the child. Lacking help of this kind, the mother remains at home until the other children have returned from school.

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But arrangements of this sort need not last long, for very early in life the child is strapped on the back and carried around

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155 is an impression, and I doubt that Okinawan mothers would agree
114 with me. The toddler stage, in my opinion, is a difficult one for the Okinawan child. It is an abrupt change from the continuous care and physical contact of infancy. This transition need not necessarily be abrupt. A child may be carried some and walk some. As he learns to walk, his mother is near him.

857 When the child is no longer carried, he ceases to be an observer and becomes a participant in play. Formerly he watched the activities of the older children and smiled to the attention when it was given. Now he wishes to catch up with them as they walk down the lanes; he is often left behind and is not fast enough nor expert enough to keep up. This is a problem of childhood everywhere, but I believe here
155 that the transition from one type of activity to another is more
855 drastic. The child also receives less attention from his parents, especially from his mother. This most mothers would deny. But I have often seen parents walking along a village lane, a toddler behind them crying and trying hard to keep up with them. They showed less solicitude and patience with him than they had when he was being carried. The mother gives less attention to the child during this period, particularly if she has had another child. In this, I do not mean to imply any lack of kindness or tenderness in the treatment of children, but to point out a change of emphasis. There is much more crying in the 2 to 3 year age groups than among infants who cry very little because they are entertained so much.

The toddler not only has the problem of becoming a participant in play, but of getting along without the close attention of the mother, his elder sisters, and possibly brothers.

855 Children are rather regularly spaced. The middle child of the
[842] lower three is most likely to be neglected. The baby is on the mother's back; he gets his breast feeding and is always with the mother. The older child has started to school or is leading an active play life. The middle child, too young for school and only tolerated by the older child who has his own interests, is too old for the breast and the back. The successful transition from the back carrying and breast feeding stage to walking and to the stage of independent play seems most successful when there are many children of the same age in the village, and consequently absorption in play can replace the intimate attention of parents and older siblings. A father may fill in this gap, allowing his young child to accompany him to work, but this experience generally belongs to a later period of childhood.

● 853 As the infant grows, nursed by the mother, he gradually receives
262 other foods, but the variety depends on the economic status of the family. The first food (other than the mother's milk) is rice water. Later rice is made into a gruel. The rice is soaked and mashed up in a quern. Families who have rice fields, or who can buy rice, may delay feeding the sweet potato to the child until the third year. Among the poor, sweet potato feeding begins much earlier. One

mother, for example, fed her child rice gruel (okayu) at eight months and at the age of one year the child began eating sweet potatoes. By the time the child is ready to walk and play, he often carries with him a piece of sweet potato, and, in season, a piece of sugar cane. 853 262

A party is held on the first birthday anniversary of the child. This is more elaborate than the one which honored his birth. Birthdays are not celebrated each year. After the first anniversary, the next are on the 13th, 25th, 37th, 49th, and 61st birthdays, that is, at twelve year intervals. 852 527

The party for the first birthday of a child is particularly tender and affectionate. At one year, he can walk or stumble, and answer or smile to the calls of his parents and grandparents. He can pick up things, throw them, and make his presence felt. The exhibition of these skills becomes part of the celebration. It is customary to invite both relatives and friends, who bring a small money present, from ¥20 which is usual to ¥100 which is uncommon. [856]

During the party, the child is given several symbolic gifts. These are placed on a low table in the middle of the room which the child can easily walk to and reach. Usually the gifts are a book, a fountain pen (or a writing brush, fude), an abacus (soroban), and a stack of paper money. These symbolize the wish that the child will become proficient in learning, writing, counting and mathematics, and will become rich. The child is eagerly watched as he unsteadily toddles to the table to see which article he picks up first. While the act is not taken seriously, the article which the child picks up first is supposed to indicate the field of endeavor in which he will be most fortunate. 527 852 431 [212] [802] [554]

These parties, small or large, include men, women, and children, but the majority of the guests usually are men. After the child has gone to bed, the party continues. In more formal and larger parties, the guests first come up to the father, go on their knees, bow, and make a short speech of congratulation. Sometimes these speeches sound as if they are prepared beforehand, other times as if they are spoken spontaneously. There is an exchange of sake between the father and his guest, both sipping from the same cup, the usual custom. The mother and the female relatives during this time are in the kitchen preparing the food. 852 527 [576] [537]

Women sit by themselves. This is true of all celebrations when the sexes are together. Women do not drink. (In a similar party near Hatsuda, the old women--usually over 60--drank a little). The jolly old women also love to dance solos in the traditional style. They dance with grace and vigor. The evening progresses without any planned entertainment. There is talking and drinking, singing, and samisen playing. Men, with a repertoire of Okinawan songs, sing in [562] [535] [887] [533]

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Young girl carrying baby sister.

Boys wrestling.

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Playing house.

Mother about to nurse her daughter says, "Now say please."

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[p 456-D]

844 kimonos, and diapers. He is placed under the blanket next to the
● [853] mother and given a gauze nipple dipped in tea and sugar to suck, which is often his only food for as long as two days if lactation is slow. Meanwhile the afterbirth is wrapped in straw and left under the floorboards in the kitchen to await the outgoing tide.

846 Tea is now served in the front room, and the birth is discussed by
593 the women who assisted. On one such occasion, the father and grandmother showed a little boy whose sister had just been born a great deal of affection. The father held the boy in his lap, and both adults told him that he was now a big brother.

844 At the first hour of the outgoing tide, old women—the grandmother
851 of the baby, relatives, and neighbors—wrap the afterbirth in rice straw
156 and bury it in a specified place outdoors behind the hearth. The purpose of the ceremony is to ensure that the child will be happy and sociable. To the accompaniment of laughing, loud clanging of pots and covers, and calling to each other, the women circle the house. When the burial is completed, they chant loudly, "May this baby al-
[152] ways laugh and be pleasant." A stone is then placed over the burial mound so that the infant will not be frightened in his sleep, an emotion which is inferred from the jerking of a young infant while asleep.

852 Until about 10 years ago a ceremony was performed by descendants
565 of noble families from Shuri over the newborn to ensure success in his
462 future role. For boys, a winnowing basket was propped up against a hoe on which a clump of soil and grass rested. While the father's mother
[178] held the child in one arm, she shot an arrow with a bow into the basket. This act was to make certain that the child would become a good
[286] hunter (provider) as well as a successful farmer. The grass on the hoe symbolized strength. A girl, on the other hand, received a miniature loom constructed especially for such occasions, which was to assure her success as a weaver of cloth. A spool of banana fiber was presented along with the loom.

852 There is a story that long, long ago an infant was born on the beach.
565 Immediately after he was born, as he still lay on the sand, a crab
538 crawled over his chest. This infant grew up to be a strong, famous man. Shuri descendants still have a custom of grandmothers holding a newborn boy in their laps and releasing a small crab, which scurries over the infant's chest. These practices, however, are absent in central Taira now and are rarely found in the outlying settlements of predominantly Shuri descendants.

846 Formerly mother and child were confined to the darkened delivery
178 room next to the kitchen and at the rear of the house for seven days, while an open fire was kept blazing in the brazier near the mother.

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
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853 There are no food taboos during pregnancy, and after birth mothers
262 can continue to eat what they wish except for certain "hard" foods,
[843] such as octopus, whale meat, and certain kinds of fish which are believed to stop the flow of milk. To stimulate lactation, the mother is given papaya boiled with flour and noodles or a medicine made from herbs.

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Chapter 13

Infancy

858 The infant is considered a helpless, pitiable treasure who is incapable
155 of knowing, understanding, or learning until he is around 6 years old.
855 If this senseless child is treated affectionately and indulgently, he will
177 grow to be a healthy, happy adult.

[861] With the spread of Japanese influence throughout Okinawa, according to informants, there evolved another belief, which in Taira is complementary to the idea of the senseless child. This new belief is vaguely conceptualized by most young parents but was verbalized concretely by at least two sets of parents. "Children are the gift of gods.* They are godly until they are 7 years old." Exoneration of misbehavior on the part of the child under 7 (6 years according to Western count) conjures up in the mind of the observer a picture of willful capricious gods who are totally unpredictable. A shrug of the shoulder and a phrase which completely defines both attitude and resignation in Japanese is, "helpless, against one's will." Because children are godlike in nature they do not know any better; because they do not know any better they are godlike in nature. Just why and how a child outgrows this temperament could not be explained by the parents. These beliefs foster the extreme indulgence, protection, and nurturance of young babies. Their physical and emotional needs are attended to constantly, with a great deal of affection.

* This notion may well have been influenced by Christian as much as by Japanese ideas.

845 mother and family. "Nursing two babies at once on a diet as meager as ours is too difficult," explain the mothers, and they also point out that multiple births cause great economic hardships.

854 Infancy in Taira, in congruence with the concept of the nature of an infant, is a period of indulgent and affectionate nurturance. Except for a brief period during the initial month of life, the baby is rarely left to lie on the floor to sleep, and during this period the mother or grandmother is always close by to pick him up at the slightest whimper. From the time he is a month old until shortly before the arrival of the next baby, he is constantly carried during the daytime on the back of another, an adult or an older child. At night he sleeps next to his mother. His carriers include parents, paternal grandparents, unmarried aunts and uncles, older siblings in an extended household, and parents and older siblings in a nuclear household.

854 Those mothers who have read or heard that it is good for babies to
178 cry occasionally never have an opportunity to test it. "The old people feel sorry for the baby and insist upon prompt attention," complain
● 853 young mothers with "modern" ideas. The immediate response of adult and child caretakers to an infant's cry is to take him to his mother, who promptly nurses him. The breast is thrust into his mouth whether he is hungry or not. "Pitiful!" exclaim old grandmothers and rush to pick up the infant. More often than not it is the newborn's father or older sibling who orders the mother to do so with the same expression.

854 There is the belief that the first four months are a trying period in
853 which the "bad" habit of crying is formed; therefore every attempt is made to keep the infant comfortable and quiet. One mother described how she and her husband took turns eating their evening meal because one of the children had formed such a bad habit. "We would take turns carrying him and walking around the yard and eating. There was nothing else we could do. Both of us did not like to have babies cry." Another mother told of how her whole family converged on her every time the infant whimpered. "Hurry and nurse it . . . must be hungry . . . may be sick . . . so pitiful!" they would say to her.

853 It is imperative that a mother have enough milk. She is given special
[262] foods and told not to get overtired. She is advised to avoid foods that could pass on properties which might be harmful to the child. Sometimes she has more milk than her infant can consume. One such fortunate mother nursed the baby of a mother whose milk supply had failed. Women who have a plentiful supply of milk are also sought out when mothers find it necessary to work at some distance from the village. In these cases reciprocal arrangements are made so the baby need not go hungry for very long.

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There is no specific or preferred posture for nursing. While the mothers are in confinement for the brief period following delivery, they often lie next to the baby and feed him. Sitting while nursing is the most common posture, but mothers frequently nurse while standing or squatting. The baby is held loosely and the mother is relaxed. If others are about, she will carry on a lively conversation and occasionally pat the baby gently on or around the region of the buttocks. When alone, she holds the baby with one arm, talks softly, smiles, and with her other hand tugs gently at the baby's limbs. Each feeding is leisurely; the breast is never withdrawn from the infant's mouth. More often than not he suckles his fill and falls asleep. 853

It is as natural to suckle one's infant at a village meeting as it is to do so in the privacy of one's home. A common sight is that of a mother sitting and listening intently to speeches while cradling her suckling infant loosely in her arms. On buses, in market places, or at large public intervillage gatherings, one is sure to encounter such a scene. [291]

The breast is used to soothe a baby when he is ill, irritable, or in distress from pain. This was quite evident when all the babies in the village were being given a series of innoculations for diphtheria and typhoid. As the injections were given in one large open room, the cries of the infant being innoculated prompted others to cry. Invariably the mother offered the breast to the baby. 853 854 751

After the birth of a child, the mother sits at home during a short rest period, watching happily as neighbors, friends, and relatives continually drop in to admire the newborn. Sipping tea, the visitors offer bits of advice, exchange the latest gossip, ask to hold the infant, and take their leave with the standard phrase: "Take care of yourself." It is a pleasant interlude, but as the family resources begin to dwindle, there is a slight but perceptible change in the attitude of the mother toward her newborn. The constant stream of visitors, for whom tea and some small tidbits must be offered, and her nonparticipation in the regular economic activities prove to be a drain on the family budget, in spite of the fact that the mother and her husband have worked with extra diligence in the months prior to parturition. The mother begins to talk about the approaching feast day and the need to get new clothing for the older children. She asks anxiously about the condition of the firewood market and starts to plan her inevitable resumption of work in the mountains and fields. In spite of her feelings of protectiveness and pity for the young baby, she begins, bit by bit, to reinstate her normal routine. Although she continues to cuddle, kiss, and affectionately nurse the infant, she thinks of the good weather and of how she might have been able to make one more trip to the mountains 846 574 846 461 [843] [594]

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before noon but for the fact that she had to return to attend to the infant.

If a grandmother is available, the mother straps the 3-to-4 months old baby onto the grandmother's back in the morning and goes off to the mountains with her husband to haul firewood or to the fields to cultivate sweet potatoes. For the first six months she returns to the house frequently during the day to nurse the infant. It is likely that while the infant demands feeding at short intervals, a mother will work in or around the village. At one of the locations for firewood bundling she can make the bamboo rings, fit the cut wood into them, and stack the bundles.

Throughout the morning hours grandmother, with the infant on her back, wanders about the village. Occasionally she offers her dry breast to the bawling infant who cannot seem to wait until its mother returns from the fields or mountains. If the mother is nearby, she hurries so that the infant does not cry for long. When the hour for lunch approaches, the grandmother hurries home to begin preparations for the noonday meal. As she walks, the infant's head bobs up and down, forward and back precariously, but it continues to sleep undisturbed.

After lunch has been eaten and the infant nursed, the adults in the household sip their tea and rest for an hour or so. Within that hour the mother may play with the infant or nap with it nestled in her arms. Rousing themselves from the noon nap, the adults return to the mountains and fields. The infant is again strapped to the grandmother's back, but this time as she slowly wends her way to the main thoroughfare, she calls out to someone in a house which boasts one of the few clocks in the village. "Hey, what is the time there?" The answer will quicken her pace, for it is near the time for an older sibling to return from school. As she reaches the main street, she joins other grandmothers as well as mothers who are anxiously scanning the direction from which the schoolchildren return. Each admires the infants on the other's back and exchanges timely topics of the day, but as the minutes pass and no children appear, they begin to grumble about the "irresponsible siblings who *must* be playing on their way home." At last the older child returns, and the grandmother hurries home with her charges, promptly transfering the infant onto the back of the older sibling. The old woman rushes to get her hoe and basket, mumbling to herself about the quantity of potatoes she should harvest for the next day's use.

An older child who ignores the crying of his infant charge will be criticized severely by his peers. If the mother happens to be in the

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frowned and tugged at the straps that were straining at her neck muscles. 593

At a still later date, Hanako, with her baby sister strapped to her back, played on the beach. At one point, when all the children were scattered over the beach and no one else was nearby, Hanako edged up to the fieldworker and asked, "Would you like this baby, teacher? Here, take her," she said wearily. Asked why she had changed her mind, the little girl smiled shyly, squirmed uncomfortably for a moment, then whispered, "She's too heavy." Her 3-year-old sister, off in the distance at that point, began to scream and cry at being left so far behind. Hanako turned to look back once, then walked on as the 3-year-old squatted on the sand and screamed to be carried. At that moment her mother appeared to nurse the infant, and Hanako ran to her. She bounded swiftly away to the 3-year-old as the mother started to nurse the baby. Returning a few minutes later with the 3-year-old on her back, Hanako deposited her disgustedly, panting heavily from the weight. "Shall we give baby to teacher, Hanako?" asked the mother, and without any hesitation Hanako this time nodded "Yes." The mother laughed and said, "Hah, she has had enough of her already. When the baby was tiny and cute, she was so eager to carry her and wouldn't give her to you, but they all get tired of babies in time." And with that the mother began to rock the baby back and forth in her arms. Smiling affectionately, she kissed and hugged the cooing infant and murmured, "Nobody wants you, eh?" Because she was an unusually outspoken mother she confided, "I think I have had enough too, here, I give her to you!" She laughed as she continued, "How can I make money, feed and clothe the children when I have to rush back from the mountains to nurse this baby." 857 854 [594]

When the child is about 6 months old, he is subjected to a painful operation which prepares him for the introduction to solid foods. The area around the navel is moxa-cauterized. Nine little brown dots in three rows of three attest to the practice of burning a special kind of grass on the skin in this area to protect the infant from various digestive complications. The child thus treated, the mother will begin to supplement breast feedings with rice water, milky white in appearance, that is spooned out of the boiling pot of rice. Sometime later, before the child is about one, bits of sweet potato and special kinds of fish mashed between the fingers are thrust into the mouth of the infant as he sits on his mother's lap at mealtime. Gradually he is given more and more solid foods until, finally, at the age of 2 he is eating rice, unmashed fish, potatoes and vegetables, but nursing is continued until 853 [751] [262] 862 855 262

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copy their behavior. When several mothers and their children are gathered, a mother of a year-old child will coo, "Cute baby" as she strokes a friend's infant's head. She smiles at her child, takes his hand, and repeats the action. A spontaneous response such as this on the part of a year-old child would evoke admiration and voluble praise from the audience. A year and a half old boy became the pride of his mother when he approached all little children with a highly nurturant attitude. He had learned his lesson so well that he considered children of his own age babies because they were smaller than himself. Walking up to them, he would bend down, pat their heads patronizingly, and take their hands to guide them along.

Equally important to the Okinawan parent is a friendly child who is well liked by everyone in the village. A happy, smiling personality is ideal, and it is this wish for the child which leads grandmothers and mothers to perpetuate the custom of burying the afterbirth of a newborn to the accompaniment of laughter and appeals to the spirits to ensure this characteristic. Adults constantly try to get infants to smile by talking and making funny sounds and faces. Even young children approach infants clapping their hands together in an attempt to elicit smiles.

Treatment of children during this initial period discourages expression of self-reliant behavior. As described above, except for rare and very brief intervals during the day, a child is strapped onto someone's back from the time he wakes up in the morning to the time he is put to bed at night. The child is carried about in this fashion from the age of one month until he is almost 2 years old.

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Chapter 14

Weaning

When a mother discovers that she is pregnant again, usually about two years after her last delivery, she begins to think of weaning her child. Most mothers nurse the last child until they are about three months

862 into their term, but one mother reported that she nursed her first son
[853] until the day before the second was born. Curiously, the determination
[861] with which mothers wean contrasts sharply with their very indulgent nurturant handling of the young child, who now encounters a period of withdrawal.

There is a month-long period of what seems, to the observer, indecision and vacillation on the part of the mother. The child is refused the breast, but, if he persists and becomes vociferous in his protests, the mother nurses him. She and others present, however, are no longer solicitous and protective. Derisive comments are directed against him, and, finally, at the end of the month drastic steps are taken. When mothers stated in their interviews that it took four or five days to wean, it usually meant after the final drastic measures were taken.

[513] The child who has slept beside his mother from birth is simply put to sleep with an aunt, grandmother, grandfather, father, or older sibling. In some instances an overnight trip to the city proves extremely convenient for the mother, who leaves the child behind instead of taking him with her as usual. If merely denying the breast does not work, big patches of black paper used for toothaches, backaches, and bruises are pasted on the chest, and the baby is told that the mother is suffering from pain there. "The black paper frightens them and we pretend to wince with pain if the child tries to nurse," report mothers. The black paper proves to be very effective. When this device is not used, another similarly drastic in nature is resorted to. Red pepper or bitter medicine is rubbed into the breast so that the child attempting to suckle is promptly punished with a very unpleasant burning sensation. Frequently a combination of these techniques is applied to wean what a mother terms a very difficult child.

[861] Shaming is a technique that is directed not only to the child but also to the mother. "Ah, shame! Hide the breast," says the mother to the child, or, "Hide, hide, drinking mother's milk!" says she, pulling one end of her blouse flap over the suckling child's head.

On one occasion an old man approached a mother who was nursing her 1-year-old. Immediately the mother pushed the child's head down to acknowledge the elder's presence. The old man, on the other hand, pulled the breast, taking the nipple from the child's mouth. "A big baby! You should not be drinking your mother's milk!" he scolded in a growling voice. As the little girl started to scream and cry, he laughed and, squeezing the breast, squirted milk into her face. The mother laughed with him, then mocked an attack on the old man to pacify the crying child.

Another technique which uses threat to the mother was applied very

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effectively in the case of a boy who did not respond to red pepper or black paper. The mother described how she tried to fend off the boy one day by simply refusing. As he fussed and cried there was a loud clanging of the pots in the kitchen. The boy stopped crying and looked at the mother who pretended to be very frightened. "Look now! There! It's a big rat coming for your mother's breast, let's hide it, quick, quick!" And with that she buttoned her blouse hurriedly and took the boy in her arms. She laughed as she described how she reminded him thereafter about the rat and how he ran to her and held onto her breasts protectively.

For the child, this whole interim period is a stormy one filled with tantrums, whining, and obstinancy. At no time, however, does the child resort to thumbsucking or other breast substitutes. For older siblings who are his caretakers, this period is a very unpleasant one. Many things displease the child. If his caretaker squats, he screams to have him stand; if he stands, he whines to have him walk. Frequently the sibling caring for him reflects the changing attitude toward the child, and, jiggles him up and down impatiently with a frown and curt comment, "What is it!"

As far as actual nourishment is concerned, weaning should not be so traumatic. Long before weaning commences, when the child is about one, he is given a spoon with which he can learn to feed himself. If families can afford it, they purchase new spoons and special small-sized rice bowls as well as chopsticks for these novices. When the budget is so limited that purchases of new implements are impossible, adult-sized ones are used, and often as not the tablespoon used for cooking and serving proves useful.

At mealtime the entire household sits in the back room, which is next to the kitchen. The head of the family sits nearest to the raised hearth, and the rest of the members form a circle to the left and right of him at a low round or rectangular table. The baby sits on his mother's or grandmother's lap. Usually the mess resulting from this early training period in self-feeding is ignored. The adult holding the novice in his lap occasionally picks up the dropped rice and thrusts small pieces of fish or vegetable into his mouth. Only when he bangs the table excessively with his spoon do his elders mildly chide him. At first the adult holding him will absently reach for the offending arm and slip some food into his mouth. Later they will begin reprimanding him by scowling and glaring at him saying, "Me-me!" (child talk for "eye," meaning "I look at you disapprovingly.") But all this is done in a very gentle way, and often when the novice bursts into tears from fright of the disapproving response, he will be hugged, laughed at, and

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[853] told, "No, no, no." In this manner the child is taught his early table manners.

As the child approaches the age of 2, the mother begins to praise him for eating without messing but still does not scold him if he fails to do so. He is the center of interest at the table, and his grandparents as well as older siblings encourage him with smiles and expressions of approval. At this time he loses interest in the spoon and is attracted to [412] the chopsticks, which everyone else at the table uses. As he struggles to handle the sticks, the adult holding him sets them in his hand. Holding his hand, with the chopsticks held in the proper position, they guide him a few times; then, as he protests and indicates annoyance at being restrained they leave him to experiment for himself. This ritual is repeated at each meal, but the child is fed from the adult's chopsticks until he has mastered the technique for himself. The child is not hurried along in his experimentations or learning attempts. The adult praises each fortunate action and quickly slips food into the smiling, open mouth, and the child continues without protest.

Before each meal, people in the village raise their bowls and chopsticks slightly and bow their heads momentarily, murmuring, "Itadakimasu" (a polite signal that the meal is about to be partaken). Similarly, at the conclusion of the meal, the bowl is raised with a brief nod of the head, but this time the expression offered is "Gochiso-sama" (to indicate it was a treat . . . feast). Two very outspoken and good-humored mothers would nurse their young babies, then take the little hands, fold them over each other, palm sides up, gently push the bodies forward, and say, "Gochiso-sama!" Serious training in this aspect of eating etiquette, however, is left until the child is learning to feed himself.

862 Weaning, then, does not involve a dramatic change in all aspects of
866 the diet of a child, and in many ways may be most traumatic as a withdrawal of the indulgent nurturance of the mother. With the arrival of the new baby, a further step in the emotional weaning takes place. The child is denied his mother's back, for she now has a new baby to tend and eventually to carry.

Treatment of succorance during weaning contrasts sharply with that of the infancy and early childhood period. Unless there is a grandmother or older siblings in the family, this is the time of real deprivation for the child. He is ridiculed, shamed, and punished for demanding to be carried. It is a time marked with temper tantrums, extended periods of crying, and sullenness. Without doubt, this is the most trying stage in the life of a Taira child. Until the words, "You are a big

843 be drawn into the tomb. Some say the prospective father should also avoid these situations. Another set of observances has an easy delivery as its aim. The woman is urged to work hard and not to overeat so that the unborn child may not become too large. During the fifth month a "belly band" is wrapped tightly about her for the same purpose, especially to keep the head small.

A woman neither hides her pregnancy nor displays it unnecessarily--- if she is married and it is her husband's child. If this is not the case she may attempt to hide the fact. On the other hand if she is bearing what may be her husband's first son , she may be very pleased at the prospect, but she does not go out of her way to show it.

843 774 [847] No clear statement was given to the effect that the "soul" enters the body of the unborn child at a particular time, but statements are made about dangers to the shii of the child. One informant suggested that this soul-like entity enters the body of the mother during the third month and that for this reason a moxibustionist had refused to abort a woman after her third month had passed.

847 Abortion Abortions have always been and continue to be performed on Okinawa. The most frequent reason is said to be the desire not to bear an illegitimate child. An old-fashioned home method is to brew camphor-wood leaves and drink the brew or to burn the leaves and breathe the smoke. Experts in cautery are also believed to be able to cause an abortion by burning moxa on the proper areas of the body. But at the present time women are said to be aborted more frequently by midwives. The practice does not appear to be regarded as illegal.

844 Birth A woman tries to work up until the time of childbirth. If she has had several children already she knows when labor starts, how long it is likely to last, and may go out to the fields confident that she can return in time. Delivery is in the kucha, the back room of the house. Women of the family are present and men are not forbidden, though children are sent out. Often a woman's husband grasps her during delivery. Formerly she squatted on the floor holding a rope suspended from a house-beam above her. At present she is usually made to lie down. The labor is spoken of as "pain" but the woman must not cry out; she may only grunt when putting her strength into the ejection of the baby. If she were to cry out because of the pain she would later feel very ashamed---"because it is something that happens to every woman; people would talk about her."

Formerly the newly-born child was neither bathed nor dressed but simply wrapped in an old kimono; now it is bathed in boiled water and dressed. The 853 infant is permitted to nurse from about the fourth day on, after there is milk in the mother's breasts. Before this it may be given a little sugar in water and possibly allowed to suck a little colostrum about the second day after birth.

178 846 [354] Formerly the mother was kept in the kucha for about a week in front of a fire burning on the jiiru, an open hearth in country homes, a kind of brazier in the city.

847 Finally one of her brothers told them the reason. When she had been a young
783 woman her husband had been awa for a long period during which she had had relations with other men and had had a baby by one of them. To avoid the disgrace and the anger of her husband, the woman's mother had buried the child alive in the back yard. The story was known to other older members of the family because some time later the bones had been discovered. When the story was told to the children, they told their dying mother that she could now go peacefully. She died soon after. All agreed that if a tablet had been made for the dead infant and incense had been burned, even in secret, the mother would not have suffered when she died. Infanticide thus may be punished by the supernatural, but then the punishment may also be avoided by the proper offerings.

847 Lebra reports that birth statistics from the village of Kitazato suggest that female infanticide has been practiced there recently. Statistics from other communities studied do not give the same skewed sex ration.

• 853 Infant Care Okinawan mothers nurse their babies for a year to a year
854 and a half, though some are said to continue even until the child is three. They keep no schedules but give their babies the breast whenever they seem to want it. They deliberately offer a fretful baby the breast not only to appease its hunger but also to comfort it and it is not unusual to see a grandmother offer her dry breast to a child as a pacifier. I once commented to two Okinawan women that a certain American doctor has argued that Okinawans are happier than Americans because they are breast-fed as infants rather than bottle-fed; the women answered immediately, "But it's not the milk; it's the love ('aijō')."

853 Infants receive no food other than milk for the first nine months. Then they are given a little gruel made by skimming off the top of a mixture of cooked rice and water. This is not given earlier because it is believed that milk and rice do not mix well in the infant's stomach. After the child's first birthday it is given most adult foods, unless it is especially weak. Most children will not eat everything, however, but, it is said, will prefer sweet foods and avoid highly seasoned foods. Mothers do not prechew food for small children as a rule but may do so in some cases, to take the bones out of fish, for example.

843 Toilet training is neither early nor strict. Adults as a rule defe-
[584] cate only in the toilet but are likely to urinate almost anywhere. They do not expect small children to be very careful. A baby wears a diaper until it is a year or a year and a half; then it may wear only a dress or shirt with no pants. At first the mother holds it over the toilet or merely off the edge of the house. In time it is expected to go to the toilet itself to defecate. Children are said to go by themselves when they are three. I have seen children of four still defecating beside the house, too busy playing to go to the toilet. They were scolded for it but received no more severe punishment.
[178] This was in the city, however, and I was told that while their mothers did not object much to this behavior, their grandmother objected more strongly and scolded their mothers for permitting it. The change in type of toilet may

513 Ventilation at night may be poor; the sliding doors are usually tightly shut and locked. In larger towns and cities this practice may be explained as due to the prevalence of thieves, but in the country there must be another reason; it is probably the fear of yanakaji or of the kijimunaa. The first, yanakaji, literally "bad winds", are ghosts, who may [375] [376] cause illness. The kijimunaa is a sea-being or tree-being who causes a frightening but harmless sensation of smothering and weight on the chest. These creatures may enter through open doors or windows. According to one informant their entry might be prevented by setting up a butcher knife in the opening but I have not seen it done. (It could only be done for a window; in a door it would be dangerous to the human occupants.)

In spite of their sleeping with relatively little change in position while in bed, Okinawans seem to be able to fall asleep in a variety of positions and circumstances, in busses and on trucks, in the midst of family activities, with noise and bright lights apparently presenting no obstacles. This ability may be the result of the early experience of sleeping under all sorts of conditions while being carried on the mother's back. There are two restrictions to sleeping. All avoid sleeping with the head oriented west, because that is the way a corpse is oriented. The other is that girls and women must avoid sleeping with the legs separated. Lebra observed one grandmother give her little granddaughter a hard pinch on the thigh for this.

Okinawans recognize that sleep is essential to maintaining the body. After a restless night one may say that he "had insufficient sleep". [171] It has been asserted that the Japanese regard sleep as a luxury rather than as a necessity. This cannot be said of the Okinawans.

515 171 Cleanliness In care of the body, the Okinawans are among the cleanlier of the world's peoples. They bathe frequently, keep their nails [302] clean by constant trimming, their teeth clean by prolonged morning brushing, and their hair neatly cut or dressed. But they are not as cleanly as the Japanese or at least as the urban Japanese. One reason why they bathe less frequently is that baths are simply less available. Many villages are without public baths. Most farmers must either pour cold water over themselves at their wells or a little hot water warmed in the kitchen. In villages [334] where there are few wells the water must be carried. Another factor may be modesty; nudity is not taken for granted as in Japan, so that one does not strip nude at the well in the daytime. A third factor may be the lack [763] of such highly-developed concepts of ceremonial purity and pollution as exist in Japan. There are no tabus on the activities of menstruating women on Okinawa as there are in Japan, for example.

291 834 Nudity Pre-school children often play nude. Mothers sometimes appear to be displaying little boys nude to demonstrate their masculinity. Photographs of naked baby boys are popular. Boys may continue to swim nude until eight or so, but girls begin to put on some garment for swimming [853] sooner. Women nurse in public and sometimes work at home with the breasts [547] uncovered. Adults of both sexes may urinate in public, but in such a way [515] that the body may not be seen. Adults do not appear publicly or privately before one another nude. Public bath houses have separate sections for men